

Montana Report
ST-4

The Montana Library annual conference is coming April 17-20 at the Hilton Gardens in Missoula, Montana. Featured speakers are Mary Bushing and author, Michael Harmon. See the library web site, www.mtlib.org for more information. Everyone welcome.

Montana, like other states, is in the middle of the bi-annual legislative session. As of this week, the library funding bills have had a positive response in the house. Many more hearings and amendments are on the way so we are hoping for the best.

The Library Association is looking at a website advertising company as a means of generating much needed revenue for the organization. Research will continue and the idea will be discussed at our next Board meeting in April.

The Montana State Library Commission has instituted a new Excellent Library Service Award (ELSA) that will now annually recognize libraries for achieving excellence in serving their communities. Each year, academic, public, school, and special libraries will have an opportunity to apply for the award using a checklist of enhanced and excellent recommendations. The checklist is adapted from Montana's current Public Library Standards which serves as a measuring tool for libraries in the state.

The Montana State Library through its Broadband Technology Opportunity Program (BTOP) recently produced three videos showcasing Montana libraries. The Federally funded programs was supported with matching funds from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and featured Bitterroot Public Library in Hamilton; the Hearst Free Library in Anaconda; the Lewis & Clark Library in Helena; the North Lake County Public Library in Polson; the Sidney-Richland County Library in Sidney; and the Web on Wheels (W.O.W.) Bus, which is a branch of the Missoula Public Library.